

## Chapter One

### The Blacksmith from Poznan on the banks of the Warta River

Jacob Nachowicz

Born 4 July 1855

Province of Poznan, Prussian Poland

Died 22 December 1926

Chicago, Illinois

Maria Muszkiet Nachowicz

Born 15 July 1863

Province of Silesia, Prussian Poland

Died 23 June 1920, Chicago, Illinois

## Part One

It was almost 7:30 in the evening. The sun had just begun to set behind the grove of the Beech trees ringing the hills of Central Europe where Jacob Nachowicz was born almost ten years earlier on July 4, 1855. He is believed to have been born in the village of Smolnica, in the Province of Poznan. The Germans called it Posen.

In 1855 Franklin Pierce was the fourteenth President of the United States of America. That year Nicholas I, Czar of all the Russia's died and was succeeded by his son, Alexander II. David Livingstone the Scottish missionary discovered the Victoria Falls on the Zambezi River in Africa, and Florence Nightingale introduced hygienic standards into military hospitals during the Crimean War.

Smolnica is about four kilometers northeast of the City of Wronki, approximately halfway on the road between the towns of Zamosc and Piotrowo, located to the northwest of Poznan on the banks of the Warta River in northwestern Poland. Smolnica is in an area referred to on some maps as 'Puszcza Notecka', the 'Wild Forest'.

The capital city of Poznan in the Province of Poznan to the south of Smolnica, was one of the most ancient communities of historical Great Poland and probably one of the cities for whom the Charter of Rights granted by Prince Boleslav the Pious in the year 1264 was intended.

Poznan was ravaged by a terrible fire in 1447. The Jesuits blamed the catastrophe on the Jews. The history of Poznan is closely associated with the Jewish community.

At the close of the fifteenth century, Poznan was one of the largest communities in then Poland-Lithuania with about 30,000 inhabitants, of which about 10% were Jews who owned 137 wooden and stone houses. Poznan became the center for the Jews of Great Poland. Its Rabbis, among the most prominent authorities of the generation, were recognized throughout the country as the renowned "sages of Poznan." This period of prosperity for them however, was marked by a severe struggle with the local townspeople and the Catholic monks. The townsmen repeatedly attempted to hinder the retail trade of the Jews, restricted the number of Jewish houses in their quarter and expelled new Jewish settlers. Students of the Jesuit seminary in Poznan organized bloody attacks on the Jewish quarter in 1575 and after a fire in 1590, the Jewish quarter was abandoned for two years.

The Jewish persecutions were renewed in 1607, and in the wake of another fire in 1613, the Jews settled on the outskirts of the city. They were later expelled in 1620, the year that the Pilgrims landed in America seeking religious freedom from the Church of England.

In 1759 Poznan was captured by the conquering Prussian Army. It remained under Prussian rule until 1807 when Napoleon in victory, gave Poland some of its lost territories and named the area the 'Grand Duchy of Warsaw.' Napoleon was subsequently defeated however, and Prussian rule was again established in 1815.

Several years later, the Prussian government tried to achieve a "Germanic assimilation" to counter the Polish element in Poznan. Equality with the Prussians was granted to that tiny section of the community whose education (knowledge of the German language), length of residence (from 1815), or act of Prussian patriotism entitled them to state citizenship.

Germanization intensified. The ties between the community of Poznan and those of Prussia and central Germany were further strengthened during the last half of the nineteenth century.

By the late 1930's only about 2,000 Jews remained in the City of Poznan. The holocaust of the Nazi's destroyed nearly all of them during World War II.

Little Jacob's father, Jedrzej, had just finished telling him again of the tale of "Basilisk". It went like this:

An old, empty, ruin of a house once stood on Krzywe Kolo Street in the old town section of the City of Warsaw. Everyone had heard that somewhere in the cellars of this old house was a great treasure. However, the treasure was guarded by a monster named Basilisk, who had the head of a rooster and the body of a reptile, with scales so hard that no knight's sword could cut them. Worse than these though, were his great red and yellow eyes which killed anyone who met his gaze. All those who had been brave enough to enter the house in hope of finding the treasure had died when they looked into those terrifying eyes.

One day, two small children, a brother and sister of a poor family, became lost in the city. Holding hands, they wandered about the streets until it began to rain. They took shelter in an old house from which the doors and windows were missing. They did not know that this was the house of

Basilisk! Inside, the children saw nothing but dust and some broken furniture. As they were deciding what to do next, they heard something come creeping up the stairs from the cellar. Frightened, they hid, trembling behind an old dressing table.

Basilisk had come upstairs because he had heard a noise. He peered around the room, but he did not look behind the dressing table thinking it was too small a place for a grown man to hide. The children peeked out and saw him, but his awful eyes were not looking their way. Finding no one, the monster grumbled and slithered back down the stairs.

Now the children knew their danger, because they had heard of the monster and his treasure! Their first thought was to run from the house as quickly as they could. But on the floor, behind the dressing table was a broken mirror, and when he saw it, the boy had a wonderful idea. He told his little sister to hurry outside and to wait for him, keeping her eyes from the house. When she had left, he picked up the largest piece of mirror and stood at the top of the stairs, holding the mirror in front of his face. He was very much afraid, but he thought of his poor parents and how fine it would be if he could bring them the treasure.

Then he stamped his feet on the wooden floor and shouted, "Basilisk, Basilisk, you big old lizard, come up and get me!" At once the monster bounded up the stairs. Coming into the light from the dark cellar, Basilisk glared around the room. His deadly eyes looked straight into the eyes of his reflection in the mirror. As he met his own gaze, the monster fell over dead!

When they found that Basilisk was no more, the people of Warsaw praised the boy for his bravery and cleverness. They took the children home and helped them carry the treasure to their amazed mother and father. The old house was torn down and a fine restaurant now stands in its place on Krzywe Kolo Street. The name of this restaurant is "Under the Basilisk." To this day, when anyone looks at another person in a very nasty way, people say in Poland that he has "a Basilisk glance."

"Now say your prayers and go to sleep Jacob. Tomorrow morning you must get up very early to make your First Holy Communion." It was May in Poland, the month of Mary. The year was 1865. In America the Civil War would end that month, and the first train holdup would take place at North Bend, Ohio.

The boy crawled out of his bed, got down on his knees at the side of the bed and looked out the open window. The stars were just beginning to appear over the river, and the leaves of the Beech trees were hardly moving.

The fingertips of his right hand touched his forehead as he began making the sign of the cross. "W Imię Ojca i Syna i Ducha Swietego"... "In the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Ghost."

When he had finished his prayers, he crossed himself again, climbed up over the edge of the bed and slid under the heavy goose-down comforter. His mother called it his 'pierzyna.' She had begun making it before he was born. Every time they celebrated an important religious holiday, Julianna would prepare a goose for dinner. She would carefully gather the tiny underbelly feathers of the goose and save them in an old, nearly threadbare cloth flour bag. By the time Jacob was born there were enough bags of feathers for her to make a 'pierzyna' for his very own.

"Dobranoc papa" Jacob said, and rolled over smiling. In a few moments his mother, Julianna, came in and kissed him on the cheek. "Dobranoc mama." She smiled, replied softly, "dobranoc Jacob, moje kochanie", turned and quietly closed the bedroom door.



Jacob's parents were Jędrzj and Julianna Nachowicz. Julianna was one of the Wisniewska girls. She was the dark haired one who had fallen so much in love with Jędrzej in the mid 1800's and married him there in Prussian occupied Poland. They had grown up together only a few farms apart.

Tomorrow the boy of nearly ten would kiss the ring and kneel before the Bishop of Poznan in the church in Wronki where little Jacob was baptized.

One of the most important days in the life of a young child in predominantly Catholic Poland is their first receiving of the Sacrament of Holy Communion. While Jacob slept that night in May, his mother would put an extra shine on his newly-made black shoes for tomorrow. The next morning, young Jacob, with the other little boys dressed in their new blue suits and shiny black buttoned hi-top shoes and the girls in their white shoes and white gowns would half-skip and half-march through the May sunshine like bands of novice angels.

Piotr (Peter) Janicki had been making shoes for the Nachowicz family for the past twenty-three years. He was the village 'szewc' (shoe and bootmaker) as was his father before him. He came to the village as a young

man in his early twenties and now he was forty-six years old. He and his parents came to Smolnica from a village near Schrimm when his grandparents died. Their other relatives moved to Poznan looking for work. There was nothing to keep them in Schrimm any longer. Besides, most of the villagers there were very old and didn't need new shoes too often. They wore-out their heavy cloth and deer hide slippers but not their shoes. There really wasn't enough business to stay there. They had to find a new village that had younger people with many children. Children always needed shoes.

Piotr liked Jedrzej and the feeling was mutual. They would talk politics for hours on end in his tiny shop at the edge of the village. Piotr had made Jacob's first pair of shoes when the boy first started walking. He always made the shoes just a little bit larger than needed after seeing how quickly Jacob was growing.

The little girls, each crowned with the flowers of spring, were along with the boys, heading for their church in Wronki, to become 'sons and daughters of God and heirs of heaven.' Today they did not fight and shove each other in the dirt. Perhaps tomorrow they would again, but not today. After the solemn high-mass had ended and the aged Bishop who had traveled by horse-drawn coach from Poznan had distributed the blessed

hosts, had pressed by the good nuns of Poznan, young Jacob Nachowicz would go home with Jedrzej and Julianna to celebrate their own private renewal of their country's thousand-year-old bond with the Holy Roman Catholic Church. Their country's history you may find somewhat interesting.

In the year of 796 Charlemagne, ruler of the Kingdom of the Franks, took his armies to the east and crushed the Avars, the most troublesome invaders. In Rome four years later, Pope Leo III crowned Charlemagne Emperor of the Holy Roman Empire. It did not take the pagan princes of eastern Europe, including Mieszko I of Poland, very long to understand that embracing the Christian faith of the Holy Roman Empire made them part of something bigger than themselves. Something from which their petty dynasties would gain prestige and protection. Thus, Poland in 965 embraced the Catholic religion and became the eastern frontier of Rome...beyond it Orthodoxy reigned.

In 1241 the Tartars, barbaric invaders from the Russian steppes, put eastern Bohemia to the torch after defeating the Russian and Polish armies, and , turning on Hungary, ravaged the countryside from end to end, killing

half the inhabitants. With the Pope's support the French Angevin family took over the collapsed Hungarian monarchy to keep eastern Europe from slipping back into the twilight of history.

It was the time when children of all ages were told the legend of the Trumpeter and the Tartars. It is as follows...

### The Trumpeter and the Tartars

In olden times all of the city of Krakow could be seen from the taller of the two towers of the Mariacki, the Church of Saint Mary. A watch man with a trumpet was always on duty in a little room near the top of the tower. The watchman looked out over the city day and night. If he saw a fire or any other emergency, he would blow his trumpet to alert the people in the marketplace below and in the town hall nearby. Then, he would call down to tell the citizens where the trouble was and they would put out the fire or give whatever help might be needed. The men who were trusted to work as watchmen took their duties very seriously, because they knew that all the people in Krakow depended on them for the trumpet signals in times of danger.

In the thirteenth century the fierce Tartars invaded the land, burning farms and towns, stealing and killing. One holiday evening when most of the

people were in church a horde of Tartars crept into the city, intending to attack by surprise. However, the young watchman in the tower saw them sulking in the shadows. He blew a loud, clear warning on his trumpet. The townspeople came rushing out of the church to defend their homes.

The angry Tartars shot arrows up at the tower, but the brave watchman continued to sound the alarm until an arrow struck him in the throat. The watchman died, but the enemy was driven away by the courageous people and the city was saved.

From that time on, other watchmen have taken their turns in the tower by day and by night. Every hour the watchman plays a little hymn called "The Hejnal" on his trumpet. He plays it four times, facing West, South, East, and North, and each time he ends suddenly on a high note, in honor of the trumpeter who gave his life for his countrymen.

If you go to Krakow and stand before the Mariacki you will hear it yourself, as I have.

In the Middle Ages, under Casimir III, the only Polish king to be called "the Great", the country prospered economically, frontier defenses were improved, and Polish law was formalized. The country was again

opened to Jewish refugees fleeing persecution in other lands as it had been opened to them after the Crusades.

The University of Krakow founded in 1364, produced a number of eminent scholars and stimulated the rise of a native literature. When King Louis of Hungary died in 1382, the nobles brought his ten year old daughter, Jadwiga, to Krakow, crowned her "King" and struck a bargain with Grand Duke Jagiello of Lithuania, a large pagan country northeast of Poland.

Jagiello was baptized in 1386 and married Jadwiga in return for the Polish crown. The territories of the two countries were finally united. Jagiello's baptism, in return, led to the Christianizing of Lithuania which included White Russia and much of Ukraine. Poles and Lithuanians subsequently joined forces, and the Teutonic Knights were defeated in 1410 at the battle of Grunwald (then called Tannenberg by the Germans).

While Christopher Columbus was discovering the 'New World', the Jagiellonian dynasty was at the peak of its power. Under the Jagiellonians, who ruled until 1572, Poland was one of the most advanced countries in Europe.

After the Jagiellonian line died out in 1572, Stephen Batory, Duke of Transylvania, came to the Polish throne. He proved to be a resolute military

leader, three times defeating the armies of the Russian Czar, Ivan the Terrible.

On the death of Batory in 1586 the unity of the old Jagiellonian empire began to crumble. Charles X Gustavus of Sweden took the opportunity and invaded Poland from the Southeast. The country was devastated. Gradually, however, the Poles rallied and there were two successful engagements in battle against the Turks. They were won by Jan Sobieski who was elected King in 1674. Sobieski made a pact with Leopold I of Austria while the Turks arrived at the gates of Vienna in 1683. Sobieski went to the rescue of Vienna and Christendom with an army of 30,000 men. There he combined forces with the army of Charles of Lorraine and drove back the Turks. They had now been defeated and thereafter ceased to be a threat to Eastern and Western Europe.

Polish independence had virtually ended with the death of Jan Sobieski. The kings who succeeded him were mere figureheads who were imposed on the country by foreign powers. Polish fortunes reached an ebb in 1697 when Russia and Prussia placed Frederick Augustus the Strong, the Elector of Saxony on the Polish throne.

As Augustus II he proceeded to involve the country in a disastrous war with Sweden. Poland was so weakened that Russian armies were able to move at will across the country, and gained power and prestige for their new Czarina, Catherine the Great.

In 1763 Catherine and Prussia's Frederick the Great agreed to the crowning of Stanislas Augustus Poniatowski, former Polish Ambassador to Russia and one of Catherine's many lovers. As King Stanislas Augustus he did much to revive the sagging intellectual life of the country by fostering education and the arts.

A few years later Catherine overreached herself and a national insurrection broke out in protest against Russian interference in Polish affairs. The rebellion, led by members of the Pulaski family, had some success at the battle of Czestochowa where the Russian army was routed.

Czestochowa is a mid-sized city in the southern Polish province of Katowice on the Warta River. It is a celebrated religious center and a world-known place of Catholic pilgrimages. It is doubtful whether any other representation of the Blessed Mother with her Divine Child possesses a more ancient and glorious history than the painting of Our Lady of Czestochowa.



Tradition holds that St. Luke painted it on the top of a cypress-wood table that came from the home of the Holy Family. At the request of the faithful, Mary sat for the portrait. When it was finished, she was pleased, saying that "My grace shall accompany it." Thus began the wonderful history of the painting.

Venerated for nearly 300 years while hidden in Jerusalem, the painting was discovered by St. Helen while she was searching for the true cross. She brought it back to Constantinople and presented it to her son, Constantine the Great, the first Christian Emperor of Rome. Constantine built a chapel for the portrait, where it remained for five centuries.

Eventually, the painting was given by the Byzantine Emperor to a Ruthenian nobleman. The portrait was taken to Kiev and installed in the Royal Palace of Belz. It remained there for the next 579 years.

In 1382, the painting was damaged by invading Tartars. An arrow pierced the miraculous image, leaving a scar that is still visible on the neck of the Madonna. Concerned with the portrait's safety, Prince Ladislaus Opolski decided to move it to one of his castles in Upper Silesia.

On the brow of a hill called Jasna Gora ("bright hill"), and within a few paces of the town of Czestochowa, the horses drawing the wagon with

the painting, stopped. No amount of coaxing or goading could make them go on. Mary appeared to Ladislaus and told him that this spot was to be her new home. The Miraculous Image was placed in a chapel and given to the care of the Basilian monks of the Greek Rite. A few years later, Prince Ladislaus gave its care to the Latin Rite Hermits of St. Paul, who are still there to this day. They are the Pauline priests and monks.

The remarkable history of the painting continued. It figured prominently in the heroic and successful defense of Poland against invaders who were enemies of the Catholic Church. Over time, the monastery at Jasna Gora became a monastic fortress and the focal point for Polish nationalism.

In 1655, the monastery held out against a mighty Swedish army. On November 18, 1655 General Muller's army of 3,000 Swedes reached Jasna Gora. Its Prior Augustine Kordecki decided to defend the holy site with 170 soldiers, 20 noblemen and 70 monks! They held out for 40 days.

In 1683, it was the Turks who attacked. And, in 1920, the Bolsheviks. As a result of these and other historical events, Our Lady of Czestochowa was crowned as Queen of Poland. The feast is observed each May 3<sup>rd</sup>.

Throughout the centuries, the painting did not escape desecration and mutilation. In 1430, Hussites looted the monastery. Pillaging whatever they could find, they loaded all of the treasures of Jasna Gora into wagons. The horses pulling the wagon with the painting refused to move. The Hussites threw the portrait off the wagon, and the horses began to pull it forward. One of the raiders, seeing the jewels and gold covering the painting, slashed at it with sabers. Having cut twice into the right cheek of Mary, he prepared to strike it for a third time, and fell dead. The other raiders fled for fear of divine retribution.

Repeated efforts by skilled artists to patch the scars failed. Each time the facial cuts reappeared. It is believed to be the will of Mary that the scars should remain as a sign to any who would desecrate her image.

"Black Madonna" refers to the skin tones of the portrait of Mary and Jesus. They with St. Joseph lived in a hot climate. Hence, their skin tone would be dark brown or olive in order to survive the intensity of the sun and avoid skin cancer. Not until the Renaissance were the paintings of Jesus and Mary with alabaster skin, blue eyes, and blond hair. Previously, all religious artwork reflected the olive skin, with black or brown hair and eyes.

Contributing to the portrait's blackened appearance is the fact that the painting is nearly 2,000 years old. When St. Luke painted the portrait of Mary with Christ, he did so with crude oil paints, which naturally dull and darken with age.

Tens of thousands of pots of incense have been burned near the painting while it was in the Eastern Orthodox Church. And, millions of wax candles have been placed before it as people make their prayerful offerings. These and other factors have resulted in darkening the image on the portrait now referred to as "The Black Madonna."

In 1772 Catherine of Russia annexed parts of Poland's eastern provinces. Frederick took Polish Pomerania and Pozan, renaming the latter Posen. The Empress Maria Theresa of Austria seized Galicia, in which lay Krakow and Lwow. In 1793 Catherine annexed another large portion of the eastern provinces, and Frederick William II of Prussia took what remained of western Poland. The final partition of Poland occurred in 1795 and a nation which, after 800 years of independence, had completely vanished from the map of Europe.

It was left to Napoleon to restore Poland.

Because the partitioning powers, Russia, Austria and Prussia were at war with France, many Polish volunteers joined the French forces. After Napoleon had defeated Russia, Austria and Prussia during the 1805-1807 campaigns, the land lost to Prussia in the last two partitions was restored to Poland. The re-established state was named the Duchy of Warsaw.

In the summer of 1812, Napoleon again was at war with Russia. As a loyal supporter of Napoleon, Poland sent some 96,000 soldiers into war against Russia. But the Russians fell back, refusing to give battle, and burned everything behind them. Over-extended, without supplies as the Russian winter set in, Napoleon's troops were forced to retreat westward after briefly occupying Moscow. On their heels came a Russian army which occupied the Duchy of Warsaw. It was this scenario which prompted Peter Ilich Tchaikovsky to write his famous "1812 Overture."

In November 1830 the youth of Warsaw revolted again against Russian domination. A formal war again developed between Poland and Russia. The Polish army fought bravely for nine months but Warsaw fell to the Russians in September 1831. Frederick Chopin, a concert pianist, was in Stuttgart in 1831 when the news of the suppression of the Polish insurrection reached him. In his anguish he immediately wrote the Etude in C Minor also

knows as the "Revolutionary", a composition permeated with patriotic feeling.

Russia began intensified police repression against the Polish revolutionaries and in 1864 they succeeded. Poland was completely incorporated into the Russian Empire under the name Vistula Land.

One of the observers of these events was Karl Marx. He urged the workers of the world to unite in the fight against the masters of the world in his Communist Manifesto published on the eve of 1848. Thus began a class struggle that would have a lasting impact on Poland and most of Eastern Europe.

The region was carried along in the evolutionary process of industrial and scientific development. Railroads, steamships, coal and gas, telegraphs, newspapers, and popular education were creating an atmosphere in which the policies of German, Austrian and Russian complete power could not survive for very long.

Meanwhile, events in Berlin in 1848 gave rise to an armed movement in the Duchy of Poznan. During April of that year there were Polish camps in the vicinity of Pleszew, Sroda, Wrzesnia and other towns, which had over 10,000 armed Poles. The Poznan Germans took up an aggressive defense

position against the Poles. Bydgoszcz, Rawicz, Leszno and other towns with predominantly German populations joined forces and armed themselves.

During parleys with the government, bloody skirmishes took place with Poles and the Prussian army. Significant encounters with the Prussian army came at the towns of Buk and Kurnik.

German residents of the Notec region marched against the Poles and committed unheard of atrocities. During these encounters, a line of demarcation was agreed upon, which was to divide the Polish section of the Grand Duchy of Poznan from the German. When the Germans protested against this division the line was tightened. With the new constitution of Prussia dated December 5, 1849 the line of demarcation disappeared and finally all of the Grand Duchy of Poznan was incorporated into the German Reich.

Between 1848 and 1914 an estimated five million people emigrated to the United States of America bringing with them a profound sense of injustice in the 'old country.' A powerful new German nation, fashioned out of the old Germanic principalities by the "Iron Chancellor", Prince Otto von Bismark, had risen in Europe.

The teaching of the Polish language was forbidden and strikes were ruthlessly put down. It was in this atmosphere that the Polish political parties which had come into being during the last decade of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century were forced to go underground.



## Part Two

Seventeen years after he made his first Holy Communion in the parish church of Wronki, Jacob Nachowicz would emigrate from his home in Poznan (Posen) on the banks of the Warta River to America and settle in Chicago on the western beaches of Lake Michigan.

It was April, 1881 now and Jacob was a 'kowal' (blacksmith). He was 25 years old. He was six feet, one inch tall with brown hair and hazel eyes. He and his good German friend Karol (Charles) Armgardt, also aged 25, were both considered to be ruggedly handsome by both the Polish and German girls they both knew.

They were in the army of William I, Emperor of Germany and King of Prussia. William I became King of Prussia in 1861. Shortly after his succession, he appointed Otto von Bismark as Prime Minister. From that time until William's death in 1888, Bismark guided the affairs of Prussia and the destiny of Germany.

Jacob liked being a blacksmith but he hated the army's regimentation. He disliked the 'goose-step' drilling and the marching forward and back,

forward and back for hours on end. Day after day he drilled. To Jacob it was a waste of good time. He did however, find the rifle practice somewhat satisfying. A soldier needed to know how to shoot. Marching in 'goose-step' however, was another matter.

He and Carl had been conscripted as were almost all of the able-bodied young men in the Province of Posen. They had been in the army for the past eight years and it was enough. Conscription in Prussian Poland was for a period of 27 years, generally from the age of 17 to 45. It was divided into active service and "Landsturm" (Reserve) service. Each man was called up usually at 20, served either two years in the infantry or three years in the cavalry and horse artillery. Then four or five years in its reserve. The balance of the time was served in the "Landwehr" (Militia or Home Guard) and "Landsturm". This principle was established by law in 1814 after the Napoleonic Wars.

When Jacob was conscripted as a blacksmith, there were 76 Cavalry Regiments in the army. He was assigned to the 1<sup>st</sup> Cavalry Division of the 1<sup>st</sup> East Prussian Corps under the command of General von Manteuffel. His division was part of the German First Army under the command of General von Steinmetz.

Jacob trained with the German cavalry carbine that was used by all cavalry units. It was the same caliber as the infantry rifle with an effective range of 500 to 600 yards. Both he and his friend Carl Armgardt qualified on the rifle range as marksmen.

When their unit went on maneuvers to Silensia, as was frequently the case, the German soldier carried about 64 pounds of equipment. This included his rifle, heavy knapsack, 80 rounds of ammunition, a huge greatcoat, camp kettle, bayonet, trenching tool, water bottle, haversack, and lots of personal odds and ends.

The 'Pickelhaube' (Spiked helmet), the image of German militarism for more than half a century was used almost in all regiments. It was made of black, cloth lined leather with a small drooped peak in front and neck-guard in the rear. A metal spike was mounted centrally on its top. The front was emblazoned with a large Prussian-style spread-eagle.

Variations of uniforms were found in the German cavalry, between the various regiments of dragoons (mounted infantry), cuirassiers (mounted swordsmen), hussars (light cavalry), and lancers. Support personnel, as were

the blacksmiths, generally wore a dark-blue jacket and grey trousers, with either the 'pickelhaube' or the dark-blue general service cap.

One rainy, wind-swept evening in March of 1881, Jacob, Carl Armgardt and another friend deserted their regiment. They were on maneuvers again for the second time that year. It would be their last. The men buried their Prussian uniforms in the soft spring mud behind a clump of birch trees, and began their journey to America and freedom.

They traveled mostly by night in a northwesterly direction towards Berlin. There they knew they could disappear into the bustling city and find work if they needed to. It took two weeks to travel from where their regiment was camped for maneuvers in the Silesian forest near Katowice, to reach the outskirts of Berlin. From Berlin they made their way to the Elbe River. The three men lived off the land by stealing what they could for food from the mostly rural German countryside along the Elbe. At the Elbe, near the town of Stendal they boarded a riverboat and went up-river to the seaport city of Hamburg. There they found dock-work for a few weeks to earn enough to add to their savings from their army pay, for their one-way tickets to America.

The next ship leaving Hamburg for America was the 'Lessing'. It was bound for the Port of New York after a brief stop in LeHavre, France. They bought their third-class tickets and boarded the vessel. After being assigned their dormitory room and bunks, they sat at the empty table in the middle of the dormitory room, played cards with the deck Carl thought to bring, relaxed and joked about how rich they would be in America.

The 'Lessing', built seven years earlier, in 1874 by Alexander Stephen & Sons, Ltd. in Glasgow, Scotland was now a sister-ship of her running mates: Gellert, Goethe, Herder, Klopstock, Schiller and Weiland owned by the Hamburg-American Line. 'Lessing' had a single-screw propeller and was capable of traveling at 14 knots (about 16 miles per hour). She was quite impressive with her compound engines, two masts and one funnel. With full sails on the masts, she could travel several knots faster. In later years she would be sold in 1889 and renamed 'Nerthe', then scrapped in Marseilles, France in 1897.

But now it was 1881. James A. Garfield would be inaugurated as the 20<sup>th</sup> President of the United States of America, Johannes Brahms would write the "Academic Festival Overture" in Vienna, and flogging would be abolished in the British Army and Navy.

The voyage across the North Atlantic would never be forgotten by Jacob, Carl Armgardt or Frank Wisniewski. When they boarded, they were recorded by the master of the vessel 'Lessing' as being steerage passengers 973, 974 and 975. The manifest shows their ages and occupations as follows:

Carl Armgardt, age 24, Passenger 973  
Occupation...a joiner

Frank Wisniewski, age 25, Passenger 974  
Occupation...a smith

Jacob Nachowicz, age 24, Passenger 975  
Occupation...a mason

Frank Wisniewski may have been Jacob's maternal cousin, since Jacob's mother, Julianna was one of the Wisniewska girls.

The 'Lessing' encountered bad weather nearly every day and night since the crossing took place in the weeks of the middle spring. Most, if not nearly all of the passengers in the third class dormitory room seldom left their bunk beds. Holding down any food was nearly impossible. Most were constantly throwing-up from the sea-sickness of the pitching and rolling ship. The stench of the 'sick-pails' was terrible.

But somehow they survived the ordeal. The price they paid for their hope of a new and prosperous life in America was the misery of their crossing the Atlantic Ocean bond for the beaches west.

After nearly twelve miserable days at sea, on May 4, 1881 the 'Lessing' entered the New York harbor. The tug boats then veered it to the left turning northward into the Hudson River. After forty-five minutes the vessel docked at Castle Garden's Pier 2.

Castle Garden was the immigrant station which, later in the shadow of the Statue of Liberty, was the predecessor station to the one erected at Ellis Island. Here Jacob, Carl and Frank would experience the harsh realities of America.

Castle Garden was built in 1807 as a fort to defend New York in the then impending War of 1812 against the British. In 1839 it became a fashionable resort catering to the Eastern wealth. Later it became a theatrical auditorium which among other famous entertainers, featured the 'Swedish Nightengale', Jenny Lind, brought to America by the famous manager, P.T. Barnum. It was later purchased by the State of New York in 1855 when it became and immigrant station under the supervision of the state.

The facilities were completely inadequate for the proper care and treatment of the immigrants who like Jacob Nachowicz, Carl Armgardt and Frank Wisniewski arrived in droves. The German Revolution of 1848 had started an unprecedented exodus from Germany and its Polish territories.

Shortly afterward the Irish and Scandinavians joined the caravan to the western beaches. Pity the unfortunate immigrants who were feeble and sick when they arrived after their arduous journey across the Atlantic. Those needing hospital attention were detained at Wards Island further inland in the East River. At Wards Island riots were frequent and many immigrants escaped by swimming to the Manhattan shore. There they asked to be arrested and confined in the New York jails rather than being starved at Castle Garden. It was hardly something to be called a garden. It was more like a graveyard. An investigation revealed that the bodies of dead immigrants were sold and used for dissection in medical schools.

In 1892 Castle Garden was closed and the Ellis Island Immigration Station, maintained by the Federal government, became operational. Ten years had passed by then since Jacob, Carl and Frank were processed for immigration at Castle Garden.



In the summer of 1881, after arriving in Chicago on the New York Central Railroad, Jacob Nachowicz, then twenty-five years old, began looking for work in the only trade he really knew well, blacksmithing.

He scanned through several of the daily Polish language newspapers as well as the 'Abendpost', the largest German language daily. Jacob read and spoke fluently in both German and Polish, as was the usual case of immigrants from their part of Europe.

It was in the 'Abendpost' that led him to his first job in America. He answered an ad for a blacksmith's helper in a stable and iron shop off Noble Street, not far from where he and Carl were renting a room in the area known as 'the Polish Patch.' It was an area near and belonging to the parish of St. Stanislaus Kostka Catholic Church. Frank Wisniewski had a room near St. John Cantius Church a few blocks away.

By 1883 Jacob and Carl had joined St. Stanislaus parish and became close friends with several of the emigrated Eastern European bakery-shop keepers near the church.

The history of that parish is worth recounting:

### Part Three

Shortly after the close of the American Civil War, European immigration gathered momentum and poured new life and energy into a country bent on a rapid recovery from the ravages of a devastating conflict. Northern cities like Chicago had not suffered much from the war, and could expand with ease. It is difficult to imagine what drew the incoming Poles to Chicago. Perhaps it was a strong labor market, or glowing reports from earlier arrivals.

As early as 1864 there were enough Polish residents in Chicago to bring about the organization of the St. Stanislaus Kostka Benevolent Society. The society aligned themselves with St. Joseph's Parish near Chicago and LaSalle Streets and St. Michael's Parish at North Avenue and Cleveland Street. The language barrier firmed their desire for a Polish Parish of their own.

The first and foremost need of the new Polish speaking immigrants was a priest who spoke their language and one who would reside

permanently with them. The Rector of Holy Name Cathedral, the Rev. James Roles, and a man named Peter Kiolbasa carried on a correspondence with the Resurrectionist Priests in Rome.

As early as April, 1869 a Resurrectionist missionary, Father John Wollowski preached a mission to them at St. Joseph's Church.

The first duly appointed Pastor was Father Joseph Juskiewicz, in October, 1869. The Society was soon able to buy four lots at Noble and Bradley Streets for approximately \$1,700. Bradley Street was re-named Potomac Street years later. By the next year the people had divided into two camps on the question of property titles held in the name of the St. Stanislaus Benevolent Society. They were urged to follow the legal route and transfer titles to the bishop's corporation. After this had been settled they got down to the business of completing the construction of the church.

On June 18, 1871 Bishop Foley blessed the new church. It was a rather imposing building with classrooms on the ground floor and the church above. Bishop Foley was well pleased with the pastoral work of the Resurrectionists, and the following month, when he was visited by their Father General, Rev. Jerome Kajziewicz, C.R., he put them in charge of all the Chicago missions among the Poles.

The Great Chicago Fire started on October 7, 1871 late at night and changed the complexion and history of the city. The loss in lives and property was staggering, but the Polish community suffered relatively little.

When Chicago began its post-fire rebuilding program, new people arrived in droves to work on the project. Within a year the congestion became unbearable and a mission church was built two blocks south on Noble Street. This became Holy Trinity Parish.

In 1872 an event of great importance to the community was the purchase of a 21 acre plot of land in Niles, Illinois and the establishment of St. Adalbert's Cemetery.

The year 1874 marked the arrival of the School Sisters of Notre Dame at St. Stanislaus and the opening of the parochial school with a student body of 150 pupils. Sister M. Rogeria was the first Superior and principal. She had the able assistance of Sister M. Melaria and one postulant.

There was as always, a rift among the Poles and a never ending struggle for leadership in the community. On the local level it was a contest between the St. Stanislaus Society and the St. Joseph Society. Later, on a city-wide level, the two groupings were the Polish National Alliance and the

Polish Roman Catholic Union. The St. Stanislaus Society remained with the Union and the St. Joseph Society aligned itself with the P.N.A.

In 1875 land was purchased at the corner of Noble and Ingraham (now called Evergreen) Streets, for the sum of \$11,500, and in 1876 the work was started on the building of a brick church, 80 by 200 feet. The first mass was said on Christmas Eve, 1877. The statistics for that year are very telling. There were 513 Baptisms, 57 Weddings, and 142 Funerals, a good indicator of the size of the growing parish.

The year 1890 marked the beginning of a long stride forward in education for the Polish community. That year St. Stanislaus College was founded at the parish and served as an incentive for many to reach for higher and better status in life. Only twelve students comprised its first class. But many would follow. The school remained at the parish for about nine years and then was moved several blocks away to Division Street.

In 1892 St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish was billed as the largest parish in the world.

That year the following was recorded in the parish registers: 2,260 Baptisms, 372 Marriages and 1,029 Funerals. The year was probably the high point of the parish's rapid growth.

With the establishment of other parishes in the city, the pressure was eased at St. Stanislaus and the parish kept its size on an even keel for many years.

It was an unwritten law among the Catholics of the Polish community that their loyalty to their church and their country could best be served by a parochial school where their children were well grounded in religious training and educated in the language of their forefathers. This was not done with any prejudicial attitude toward American ways, but more in a spirit of loyalty to their traditions and background.

This characteristic of the Poles was frequently misunderstood by others. Advocates of immediate Americanization never realized that what they labeled 'ethnic clannishness' was actually a defensive attitude built up over centuries by many generations that desired to survive as a rightfully proud people. Parochial schools were of prime importance to them and were expanded at a startling pace.

The construction of an immense school building, convent and auditorium at St. Stanislaus began in the spring of 1906. In the summer and fall of 1908, electrical lighting was installed in the church and the interior was redecorated. The statistics for that year are a good indicator of the

activity of the parish...1,135 Baptisms, 205 Weddings, 477 Funerals and 537 First Holy Communicants. The number of families in the parish registry reached the staggering figure of 5,438.

World War I had begun in Europe in the year 1914. It had a twofold effect upon the parish. The European theatre of war was centered in occupied and partitioned Poland, where the opposing armies, German and Russian, had traversed the country seven times. Each crossing brought the country closer to complete devastation. Many had families and close relatives there and they were deeply concerned. The other effect of the war was the financial bonanza developing in the states as a result of an expanding war production. Many of the parishioners now found themselves in a financial position that permitted them to buy or build homes in the newer or better sections of the city. The real estate movement was west and northwest. The parish naturally felt the loss of a large number of its members.

In the years before America's entry into the war there was a great deal of activity aimed at helping, in some way, the liberation of Poland. The three powers that had partitioned Poland, namely Germany, Russia and Austria were vitally involved in the war, and many of the people were confident that

an allied victory would somehow serve as a stepping-stone in attaining their objective.

America was neutral, and any activity on the part of an ethnic group living in the United States, which could embarrass the government, was frowned upon.

On April 6, 1917 the United States entered the war on the side of the allies. Now everyone believed that Poland's liberation was synonymous with an American victory. The Fourteenth Point of the Treaty of Versailles states: "There must be a free and independent Poland." President Woodrow Wilson was the author of this point in the treaty, and insisted vehemently on its insertion therein, over the violent objections of the English Prime Minister, Lloyd George. What became an accomplished fact at Versailles, had its beginning at the St. Stanislaus Parish.

On February 6, 1918, Bishop Paul Rhode, with the approval of the Chicago Archbishop, George Mundelein, opened a two-day convention of the Union of Polish Clergymen, at St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish.

The most widely known Pole in 1918 was the concert pianist Ignace Jan Paderewski. His personal influence throughout the world was renowned. He was a man of great talent and stature, an incomparable artist and a Polish



patriot who pledged his talent and wealth to the Polish cause. His statesmanship had not emerged in the fullest as yet, but everyone thought it was very appropriate and fitting that he address the convention on its closing session. He was considered an orator and a very fine public speaker Paderewski insisted that his address be given in closed session with only the clergy present.

He spoke for more than two hours. He outlined the political, religious and historical background of the Polish nation. His oratorical and literary style, his personal magnetism and his obvious patriotism made a lasting impression on his audience. Many years later, those who had the good fortune to have been present, insisted it was the most memorable address they ever heard. His closing remark was a solemn pledge to devote himself, his influential contacts and all his possessions in a ceaseless effort for the cause of Poland.

It was the genius and statesmanship of Paderewski that pinpointed the solution and provided the key, when in his address at St. Stanislaus Kostka he emphatically stated: "We must direct all our efforts to convince the President of the United States that a free Poland is a necessary condition to save the world for democracy." He reached the President, convinced him and

freed Poland. Without the intervention and support of President Wilson, Poland would not have had an advocate at Versailles.

During the war almost a thousand young men from the parish served in the various branches of the military, and the parishioners shouldered their share of the war effort in defense work, and the purchase of war bonds.

On November 11, 1918 World War I came to an end and the parish looked forward to the return of its "doughboys." Before their return however, there was a farewell to another large number of volunteers who had joined the corps of the Polish Army being organized all over the world. Its purpose was to return to liberated Poland and carry on the war against the invading Bolshevist Russia.

This was the famous General Haller's Army that defeated the Russians in 1920, in the battle now known as the Miracle of the Vistula. General Joseph Haller visited the parish in 1923 and emphasized the fact that his many Chicago volunteers had been sent off from St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish. He decorated the pastor with the Veteran's Medal as he acknowledged to the parish all the work done on behalf of the Polish cause.

One of the newly-arrived Polish American immigrants who joined and fought with General Joseph Haller's Army in Poland was Victor A. Wydra.

Victor emigrated to America with his father in 1913, at the age of seventeen. Five years later, in 1918, Victor left Chicago and sailed to France via Canada, to join Haller's Army on the Eastern Front. He returned to Chicago, departing from the Port of Danzig, now known as Gdansk, on July 26, 1920 aboard the U.S. troopship "S.S. Pocahontas."

Two years later on June 13, 1922 Victor A. Wydra married Jacob and Maria's daughter, Agatha Nachowicz in St. Stanislaus Kostka Church. Their family's story is presented in Part Twelve..."The Soldier from Kety."

In the mid 1920's the number of St. Stanislaus parishioners decreased. Many were joining the westward movement to the outskirts of the city and even to the suburbs. It was an era of prosperity and change. These were the frenzied years before the onset of the great depression. Immigration was almost at a standstill, due to the quota system, and there were none to replace those who had moved on and out. It remained a large parish, however, because many of the elderly parishioners who lived far away from the parish, still kept their membership in the parish. They continued to

support it in some fashion, and almost always expressed the wish that they be buried from there.

On December 7, 1941 came the attack on Pearl Harbor and the entry of the United States into World War II. At the parish it was a repetition of the same things that had occurred in 1917. Most of the young men went into service, and the fears and anxieties for their well-being were allayed only through prayer and the many devotions and services that took place in the parish church. War production and its resultant prosperity again brought on the departure of many parishioners.

The Rev. Valentine Lesiak, C.R. became pastor in July, 1951. It was during his tenure that major changes took place at the parish, and he had the difficult assignment of adjusting to them. The first step in Urban Renewal in Chicago was the planning and building of express highways. One of these, the Northwest Expressway, was a diagonal artery pointed from downtown toward the city's chief airport. According to the plans submitted to the authorities, the clearance for the right of way cut through the parish property and called for the removal of the church and parts of the other buildings. This naturally created a furor. Opposition and strong pressure came from the city's Polish community that regarded St. Stanislaus Kostka as its very

foundation. After a great deal of discussion and flexing of political muscle, it was finally agreed upon to move the highway eastward and reduce the removal of parish buildings to a minimum...the heating plant and part of a school building.

The new highway was completed in November, 1960 and dedicated a few days before the Presidential election that brought John F. Kennedy to the White House. After his assassination in November, 1963, it was renamed the Kennedy Expressway.

On the feast day of its patron saint, St. Stanislaus Kostka, November 13, 1966, the pastor announced the opening of the parish centennial. The Centennial Mass was celebrated on Christ the King Sunday, October 29, 1967.

## Part Four

In the winter of 1883, two years after arriving in the United States, Jacob Nachowicz and his good friend Carl Armgardt met two neatly dressed and very attractive young ladies. They met in the Vienna Bakery Shop just off Division and Noble Streets, not far from where Jacob worked as the neighborhood blacksmith. The owners of the bakery were Ernst and Anna Jarosch. They were recent immigrants from Vienna, Austria.

The two men went into that bakery for its special rye bread. It was made with an additional ingredient, sauerkraut. They would each purchase two loaves. That would be enough to last them for an entire week. Occasionally they would treat themselves to Anna's warm apple strudel on Thursday mornings. Austrians were generally considered by everyone to be excellent bakers. Especially the Viennese Austrians. To get the apple strudel before it was sold out Jacob or Carl had to get there early. Sometimes it was still very dark outside when the bakery opened. The strudel hardly ever lasted more than a few hours after the doors opened. The two men could never determine the special taste it had, until one day Jacob guessed it...it

was the white raisins. Most strudels were made with cheaper black raisins.

Anna's were made with the more expensive, larger and sweeter white raisins.

The two ladies that they met in the bakery were recent immigrants from Prussian occupied Polish Silesia. They had met each other in a dress shop on Chicago Avenue just east of Ashland. They soon became close friends since they only lived three blocks apart. They were both twenty years of age. Their names coincidentally were 'Maria' and 'Marie'.

The meetings in the bakery shop on Noble Street with Jacob and Carl continued for several of the following Saturday mornings. They usually got there around 7:30 A.M. There was just enough time afterward to make the 8:30 mass at St. Stanislaus. Maria came to the bakery with Marie and Jacob and Carl came together. Soon they all went to mass together.

In February of 1884 the four went on their first date together. Jacob with Maria Muszkiet and Carl with Marie. Two weeks later the two couples had their first dinner together in a restaurant located on the corner of Division and Ashland Avenues. It was the beginning of their courtships that led to their marriages the following spring.

Who was Maria Muszkiet and what is known about her family? The name 'Muszkiet' is unique and clear... 'Musket'. Perhaps this kind of a

surname would have been adopted by a soldier, or a smith who worked on making muskets in the 15<sup>th</sup> or 16<sup>th</sup> century in central Europe.

Maria was born July 15, 1863. She was the daughter of Franciszek and Julianna Kowalik Muszkiet.

In 1863 Abraham Lincoln was the President of the United States of America. During that year the Confederate Army suffered terrible defeats at Chattanooga, Tenn., Vicksburg, Miss., and at Gettysburg, Pennsylvania where the military cemetery was dedicated during the Civil War by President Lincoln with his famous 'Gettysburg Address.'

Maria Muszkiet emigrated to America on April 27, 1883 with her older brother Jacob aboard the vessel 'Hohenstaufen'. They sailed from Bremen, Germany to Baltimore, Maryland. They are shown on the passenger manifest as Jacob, aged 23, passenger #163 and Marianna, aged 19, passenger #164, both are listed as being farmers.

Jacob Muszkiet was believed to have been born June 7, 1860. Perhaps they came to America after the deaths of their parents. Jacob Muszkiet is known to have brought his skills as a carpenter with him.

Their ship, the S.S. Hohenstaufen was built in 1874 by Earle's Shipbuilding & Engineering Co., Hull, England. She carried 142 first and



800 third class passengers. Her maiden voyage was from Bremen to Southhampton to New York on October 24, 1874. She had a single screw propeller and was capable of speeds of 12 knots (14 miles per hour). She had compound engines, two masts and one funnel. She was built for the North German Lloyd line for their lucrative Bremen-New York service. In later years she was transferred to the Australian trade and sold for scrap in 1900.

Jacob Muszkiet married a girl named Maria Stas. He was a cabinet maker who later lived at 3036 N. Drake Avenue in Chicago. Jacob Muszkiet died on May 29, 1935 at the age of almost 75, of hypostatic pneumonia at Edgewater Hospital in Chicago. After being mourned by his family and friends at the Charles Luka Funeral Home at 3601 W. Diversey Ave. and following a funeral mass at St. Hyacinth Catholic Church at 3640 W. Wolfram St., he was interred on June 1, 1935 at Lot 675, Block 6, in Section 14 of St. Adalbert's Cemetery, Niles, Illinois.

His wife, Maria Stas Muszkiet died nine years later on November 26, 1943 at the age of 77. She too is interred at St. Adalbert's Cemetery.

Jacob and Maria Stas Muszkiet are believed to have had the following children:

Frances      b 1887 d1973

She is believed to have married Boleslaw Mlodzieniewski

Peter

Charles

Frank

James b 1901 d 29 July 1952

He is believed to have married Irene Podraza. They were believed to be the parents of James Jr. and Robert Musket.

In St. Adalbert's Cemetery, Section 14, Lot 675 are buried:

James Musket      b 1901 buried 1 August 1952

He was buried from St. Viator Church, Chicago

Robert T. Musket b 1925 buried 10 Jan 1946

Inscription: T/Sgt 376 INF 94 Div

Frances Mlodzieniewski 1887-1973

Boleslaw Mlodzieniewski      1886-1925

Florence Mojeski      1911-1952

Possibly the daughter of Frances and Boleslaw

There are two other Musket family members interred in Section 43, Lot 72, Block C in St. Adalbert's Cemetery:

Charles Musket died at age 57...interred 28 Sep 1951

Rose Musket died at age 78...interred 5 Apr 1972

Quite likely husband and wife.

The name Muszkiet was apparently Americanized to Musket.

It has been said that one of Maria Muszkiet Nachowicz's relatives helped to develop the Fisher X-Ray machine. Frank Muszkiet, a nephew of Maria Muszkiet Nachowicz, married a woman named Hendriksen. She was believed to have been fifteen to twenty years older than Frank. She was a registered pharmacist. They owned a chain of drugstores on Chicago's northwest side under the business name of 'Musket and Hendriksen'.

Jacob and his sister, Maria Muszkiet were believed to have been born in the village of Imielin in Prussian occupied Polish Silesia. The village is located approximately 14 kilometers north of a village called Oswiecim. The Germans called it Auschwitz. Imielin is also approximately 20 kilometers southeast of the City of Katowice (Kattowitz in German). About 55 kilometers east of Imielin is the ancient Polish capital of Krakow.

The Muszkiet family was born in a region in east central Europe known for centuries as Silesia. In Czech it was known as Slezsko, in German Schlesien and in Polish Slask. It is the principal coal and mineral mining area in central Europe.

Silesia was an area in which intensive economic development took place in the 13<sup>th</sup> and 14<sup>th</sup> centuries after the Knights and Dukes of Europe returned from the Crusades. Cities developed all around the area such as Liegnitz (in Polish it was called Legnica), Reichenbach (Dzierzoniow), Waldenburg (Walbrzych) and Oppeln (Opole). However the community of Breslau (now in Polish called Wroclow) became by far the most important city in Silesia.

It was there that the University of Breslau was established. Silesia was the area that led the east central Europeans in the development of manufacturing and industry. The men of Silesia were among the most skilled in various trades and guilds. They supplied war materials such as muskets (perhaps 'Muszkiets') and cannons to the armies of the nobles.

Silesia was annexed by Prussia in 1742.

The skilled tradesmen of Silesia were world renowned during the Industrial Revolution. Their bricklayers and chimney builders were recruited

by American construction engineers after they went to Silesia to see the works that they had heard so much about. Many chimney builders were offered, along with their families, passage to and employment in cities like Detroit and Chicago.

So they came and built the large multi-story industrial factory chimneys which stand today as strong and efficient as they were in the 1880 and 1890's. These were the Silesians. The tradesmen, craftsmen and guildsmen who brought America into the twentieth century. Maria and her brother Jacob Muszkiet were Silesians and proud of their heritage.

As did Jacob Nachowicz and his best friend Carl Armgardt, Maria and her brother Jacob Muszkiet spoke Polish and German fluently.

When Maria was born, Europe was not organized into national units with national identities as we know them today. They did not usually think of themselves in terms of 'Polish', 'German', 'Hungarian', etc. They thought of their alliance to a specific ruler rather than alliance to a nation. Thus, when the Poles entered the U.S. they were counted as Prussians, Austrians, Russians, Germans, and Hungarians.

Jacob Nachowicz and Maria Muszkiet were married on May 13, 1884 at the altar of St. Stanislaus Kostka Roman Catholic Church. The priest who

said the mass and performed the wedding ceremony on that spring morning was Rev. A. Lett, C.R.

Jacob and Maria's witnesses were Jacob's best friend Carl Armgardt and Frank Wisniewski who was believed to be Jacob's maternal cousin and the man with whom he and Carl emigrated on the 'Lessing' three years earlier.

After the wedding mass they all went for studio photos on Division Street. Afterwards the party of eight: Carl and Marie Armgardt, Frank Wisniewski and his wife, Jacob and Maria Muszkiet and the new Pan i Pani (Mr. & Mrs.) Jacob Nachowicz, went to Cesar's Restaurant on Ashland Avenue for their wedding dinner. One by one the toasts of “Sto Lat” (May you live a hundred years!) were offered by Carl and Frank while the women clinked their wine glasses encouraging Jacob and Maria to kiss and kiss again.

In the year 1884, when Jacob and Maria were married, Chester A. Arthur was the President of the United States. That year Mark Twain wrote “Huckleberry Finn” and Johannes Brahms wrote Symphony No. 3 in F Major, OP90.

In the early spring of 1890, Jacob Nachowicz at the age of 35, became a naturalized citizen on March 6, 1890.

His wife Maria was 27, their daughters Julia and Mary (my grandmother to be) were five and two respectively. Their son Frank was three and a half years old.

In 1890, the year of Jacob's naturalization, the states of Idaho and Wyoming were admitted to the Union. Rubber gloves were used for the first time in surgery at Johns Hopkins Hospital in Baltimore, Maryland and the first entirely steel-framed building was erected in downtown Chicago.

Jacob's Naturalization Document appears in Volume 25, Page 478 of the records of the Superior Court of Cook County, Illinois.

The following is an abstract of that document:

Superior Court-Cook County

Volume 25 General

Present-The Honorable Henry M. Shepard  
(Judge of the Superior Court of Cook County)

Joel M. Longenecker, States Attorney

C.R. Matson, Sheriff of Cook County

Attest, Patrick M. McGrath, Clerk

March 6, 1890

“And now on this day comes into open court Jacob Nachowicz, an alien, and applies to be admitted as a naturalized citizen of the United States. And it appearing to the satisfaction of the Court that the said applicant has resided within the limits and under the jurisdiction of the United States for and during the full term of five years last past, and one year and upward immediately preceding the date hereof in the State of Illinois, and that during this term he has sustained a good moral character, and appeared to be attached to the principles contained in the Constitution of the United States, and well disposed to the good order, well-being, and happiness of the same, and that two years have elapsed since the said applicant declared his intention to become a citizen of the United States, according to the provisions of the several acts of Congress heretofore passed on that subject; and he having now here in open court taken and subscribed the oath required by those laws to support the Constitution of the United States, and to renounce and adjure all allegiance and fidelity to every foreign Prince, Potentate, State, or Sovereignty whatever, and more particularly all



allegiance which he may in any-wise owe to the Emperor of Germany of whom he was heretofore a subject.

It is heretofore ordered and adjudged by the Court, that the said Jacob Nachowicz be and he is hereby admitted to all and singular the rights, privileges and immunities of a naturalized citizen of the United States, and that it be certified to him accordingly.”

The growing Nachowicz family established their first home at 103 or 111 Wade Street. Years later the street names and numbers were changed. Wade Street became Cortez Street. While they lived there for the next eighteen years, they had the following eight children born to them:

1. Julia.....born 4 December 1884
2. Francis (Frank).....born 25 September 1886
3. Maria (Mary).....born 1 August 1888
4. Theophil (Phil).....born 4 January 1891
5. Bronislawa (Bernice).....born 5 September 1893
6. Joseph.....born 28 February 1897
7. Agnieszka (Agnes).....born 8 October 1899
  - She died as an infant on 29 November 1900 of pneumonia
8. Agatha.....born 28 January 1902

At the time of Agnieszka's death on 29 November 1900, Maria is believed to have had a still-born child. They named him Jacob. Three days later Lot 10, Block 7 of the St. Procopius Section in St. Adalbert's Cemetery was purchased when Agnieszka and the stillborn child, Jacob were buried. The lot size is rather large being 16' x 16'. It was purchased through the St. Stanislaus Kostka Church and the deed was dated January 2, 1901 when the gravesite was paid for.

The large Nachowicz family could not continue living in their cramped quarters. They moved several blocks west to 1341 Wade Street (now called Cortez).

At that new address, their last two surviving children were born:

9. Frances (Francine).....born 29 March 1904

10. Peter.....born 28 June 1906

These descendants of Jacob and Maria Muszkiet Nachowicz were my great Aunts and Uncles. The third child and second daughter listed, Maria, was my maternal grandmother who married Michael J. Turbak on August 21, 1907 at St. Stanislaus Kostka Church where she was baptized.

As the years passed with the attendant joys and sorrows, the Nachowicz children grew, matured, married, and left home.

On July 3, 1911, Jacob Nachowicz at the age of fifty-six and his son Frank, then aged twenty-five, who lived at 2128 N. Sawyer Avenue in Chicago, signed as character witnesses and co-sponsors on the petition for American citizenship for my maternal grandfather, Michael J. Turbak.

Michael was twenty-five as was Frank, his brother-in-law. On the petition, Jacob indicated that he was a blacksmith and was a naturalized citizen at that time. He stated that he then lived at 1341 Wade Street (now called Cortez).

A few years later, around the time of armed tensions in Europe, but before the start of World War I, the large Nachowicz family had again outgrown their quarters at 1341 Wade Street in the St. Stanislaus Kostka Parish, and moved to their new home at 2821 N. Sawyer Avenue. It was several blocks north of where their oldest son Frank was living. Frank was in the enviable business of real estate then. People were constantly moving upward and outward in Chicago. That was the business to be in.

During those years Jacob Nachowicz became interested in Chicago politics. He is said to have been a democratic committeeman who was, in effect, the boss of the predominantly democratic 39<sup>th</sup> Ward of Cook County.

After the United States entered World War I on April 6, 1917, Joseph J. Nachowicz, then aged twenty-one, enlisted in the United States Army on September 2, 1918. His brother Frank had enlisted twelve months earlier at the age of thirty-one on September 19, 1917.

Both brothers' actions were violently opposed by their father. Jacob is believed to have become very angered at the thought of his two sons fighting against his 'countrymen'. He is alleged to have said, "How can my son's take up arms and fight against my Kaiser?" But they did nevertheless, over his strong objections.

Private Joseph Nachowicz, Serial No. 3017709, was assigned to Company D, 150<sup>th</sup> Engineer's Bn. in the 30<sup>th</sup> 'Tennessee' Division. He went to Europe as a 'Doughboy'. At the end of World War I he was honorably discharged on April 29, 1919. His rank upon leaving active duty is unknown. He was very proud of his military service and afterward had been an active member of the American Legion, Gladstone Post #777 for over thirty years, until his death in 1965.

His brother Frank, however, was stationed at Camp Rucker, Alabama during World War I and never did go overseas. He was honorably discharged

on February 10, 1919 as a Sgt. in the U.S. Infantry. His Serial No. was 1542586.

Maria Niskiet Nachowicz died in her home at 2821 N. Sawyer Avenue, at the age of 56 years and 11 months on June 23, 1920 of cancer of the pancreas. Her physician was Charles Williamson, M.D. His office was at 25 E. Washington St. in downtown Chicago. She was mourned by her family and friends in the parlor of her home, as was usually the case in those days. She was interred by the family undertaker, the Wisniewski Funeral Home at 1151 North Noble Avenue shortly thereafter, at the family gravesite, Lot 10, Block 7, in the St. Procopius Section of St. Adalbert's Cemetery. The large 16' x 16' gravesite, as mentioned, had been purchased by Jacob Nachowicz in November, 1900 when their daughter, Agnieszka died.

In 1920, the 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the U.S. Constitution went into effect and Prohibition began throughout the nation. That year Warren G. Harding was elected the 29<sup>th</sup> President of the U.S., and American women were given the right to vote.

The following death notice appeared in the Chicago Tribune on June 25, 1920:

Nachowicz: Mary Nachowicz, beloved wife of Jacob Nachowicz, loving mother of Julia, Frank, Mary, Ted, Bessie, Joe, Agatha, Frances, and

Peter. Fond sister of Jacob Muszkiet. Born July 15, 1868 died June 23, 1920 at her home 2821 N. Sawyer Av. Services at St. Hyacinth's Church Monday June 23, 1920. Burial at St. Adalbert's Cemetery.

Six years following Maria's death, on December 22, 1926 Jacob Nachowicz passed away at his home on Sawyer Avenue at the age of 71 years, 5 months and 18 days. His cause of death had been uremia and myocarditis. A grandson had been told that Jacob died at home in his favorite Morris chair with his dog 'Shaggy' sitting by his side through his last minutes. 'Shaggy' continued to live out his life with Jacob's son Joseph on Markham Street in Chicago and is believed to be buried there in the backyard.

The following death notice appeared in the Chicago Tribune on Friday, December 24, 1926:

Jacob Nachowicz: December 22, beloved father of Julia, Frank, Mary, Theophilus, Bronislas, Joseph, Agatha, Francine and Peter. Funeral Monday Dec 27 from his late residence 2821 N. Sawyer Av. To St. Stanislaus Kostka Church 10:30 AM. Burial at St. Adalbert's Cemetery.

The family undertaker had again been J. Wisniewski, located at 1151 N. Noble Street in the 'old neighborhood'. Jacob had been a retired blacksmith. The entire Nachowicz, Turbak, Sala, Marchewka and Wydra families were present for Jacob's burial. It was recalled by his daughter, Francine and son-in-law, Leland Johnson, as being a cold, yet bright day as

they all stood in St. Adalbert's Cemetery in the then unsettled outskirts of Chicago.

In the Year 1926, when Jacob Nachowicz passed away, Calvin Coolidge was the 30<sup>th</sup> President of the United States. That year Americans were singing “Bye, Bye, Blackbird” and “When Day is Done.” The ‘permanent wave’ was the new woman’s fashion, and A.A. Milne wrote “Winnie the Pooh”.

Jacob and Maria’s daughter, Mary Nachowicz Turbak (my grandmother) was 38 years old. My mother, Eugenia, was 18. I would be born 8 years later on October 21, 1934.

The descendants of Jacob and Maria Muszkiet Nachowicz are presented as follows:

Part				
5	1.	Julia Nachowicz Marchewka	Born 4 Dec 1884	
			Died 6 Feb 1957	Chicago, Il.
6	2.	Frank Nachowicz	Born 25 Sep 1886	
			Died 22 Oct 1945	Chicago, Il.
7	3.	Maria Nachowicz Turbak	Born 1 Aug 1888	
			Died 16 Apr 1942	Chicago, Il.
8	4.	Theophil Nachowicz	Born 4 Jan 1891	
			Died 28 Nov 1967	Memphis, Tn.
9	5.	Bronislawa (Bessie) Nachowicz Sala	Born 5 Sep 1893	
			Died 6 Oct 1929	Chicago, Il.
10	6.	Joseph Nachowicz	Born 28 Feb 1897	
			Died 1 Sep 1965	Chicago, Il.
11	7.	Agnieszka Nachowicz	Born 8 Oct 1899	
		(Died as an infant of pneumonia)	Died 29 Nov 1900	Chicago, Il.



12	8.	Agatha Nachowicz Wydra	Born 28 Jan 1902	
			Died 3 Sep 1982	Chicago, Il.
13	9.	Francine Nachowicz Johnson	Born 29 Mar 1904	
			Died 19 Mar 1993	Olympia, Wa.
14	10.	Peter Nachowicz	Born 28 Jun 1906	
			Died 4 Dec 1960	Chicago, Il.